

WRRTC FEBRUARY 2022 MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED

**Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission
Commission Meeting – Friday, February 4th, 2022 at 10:00 am
Via ZOOM**

1. 10:00 AM **Call to Order – Alan Sweeney, Chair**
2. Roll Call. **Establishment of Quorum – Matt Honer, Admin**

Crawford	Carl Orr, 2 nd Vice Chair	Absent	Jefferson	Mary Roberts	X
	Mark Gilberts	X		John Kannard	X
	Tom Cornford	Excused		Kathy Bahner	X
				Karl Zarling, Alternate	X
Dane	Kevin Potter	X	Rock	Russ Podzilni	X
	Jeff Huttenburg, Treasurer	X		Wayne Gustina	X
				Alan Sweeney, Chair	X
Grant	Gary Ranum	X	Sauk	Brian Peper	X
	Mike Lieurance	X		Dave Riek, 2 nd Vice Treasurer	X
	Robert Scallon, 1 st Vice Chair	Excused		Marty Krueger	X
				Tim McCumber, Alternate	X
Green	Harvey Kubly, 1 st Vice Treasurer	Absent	Walworth	Al Stanek	X
	Oscar Olson	X		Richard Kuhnke, 2 nd Vice Secretary	Excused
	John Buol	X		Allan Polyock	X
Iowa	Charles Anderson, Secretary	Excused	Waukesha	Dick Mace	X
	Kate Reimann	X		Richard Morris	Excused
	Susan Storti	X		Karl Nilson, 3 rd Vice Treasurer	X

Commission met quorum.

Others present for all or some of the meeting:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Lucht – WSOR • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Stern, Todd Wojciuk, Teri Beckman – WisDOT • Alan Anderson, Pink Lady RTC.
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3. Action Item. **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice – Noticed by Honer.**
 - o Motion to approve meeting’s public notice – Gustina/Podzilni. Passed Unanimously.
4. Action Item. **Approval of Amended Agenda – Prepared by Honer.**
 - o Motion to approve the agenda. Ranum/Storti. – Passed Unanimously.
5. Action Item. **Approval of draft December 2021 Meeting Minutes – Prepared by Honer.**
 - o Motion to approve the December 2021 with minor clarifications meeting minutes. Mace/Reimann. Passed Unanimously.
6. Updates. **Public Comment – Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair.**
7. Updates. **Announcements by Commissioners**

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. WRRTC Financial Report – Huttenburg, Treasurer

Huttenburg presented the cashflow and balance statement. Huttenburg explained that due to meetings taking place earlier in the month, the cashflow and balance reports are usually a month behind. Huttenburg presented one bill for a bond for the treasurer for \$30. Huttenburg explained the two balance sheets being presented, the final 2021 balance sheet and the changes from the 2021 to 2022 balance statement. Changes include removing the rail project funds from previous year’s budgets from the current year’s budget balance table, but including these totals on the report outside of the annual budget balance sheet.

Mace asked if the corrections will be recorded and Honer explained that corrections are made and filed electronically and on a paper file for the Commission’s records. Nilson asked for receipts to be kept by the Commission regardless of who pays the taxes. Sweeney asked for the changes to the report to also be recorded in the minutes.

- o Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report and pay the Bills. Mace/Kannard. Passed Unanimously.

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9. **Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Report on Operations – Ken Lucht, Roger Schaalma – WSOR**

On January 25th, WSOR opened bids for the Prairie Sub CWR project from Crawford to Wauzeka. Low bid was accepted and rail is expected to be delivered by July 15th. WSOR submitted two FRPP grant applications to WisDOT for a tie project on the Reedsburg Sub. from Devil's Lake to Reedsburg, and a system wide bridge (7 bridges) replacement and repair project. WSOR is working with the Town and City of Boscobel for rail improvements in the industrial park west of the City. WSOR is also having conversations about the closing of Borden Rd as a public road. Lucht stated the Middleton Center fence is incomplete and the property is piling snow onto the railroad right-of-way. Lucht reported that Watco has begun operating the Fox Valley and Lake Superior rail systems in the state, lines recently acquired from CN by Watco. Lucht stated he will send out a map. Mace asked about a fatality in Waukesha. Lucht reported it was a CN train and it was a suicide.

Polyock asked about the bridge over Hwy 67 in Walworth and when the repairs will begin. Lucht stated the bridge was hit last year by some type of large equipment such as a crane, and caused about \$300k in damage to the bridge. Lucht will follow up.

Alan Anderson asked for clarification on the Reedsburg Sub. tie project and if it will finish the Reedsburg Sub. Lucht stated the tie project from Madison to Waunakee was completed recently and the planned next phase of tie replacements on this subdivision includes replacing 11 at-grade crossings and 11k ties. Lucht stated a tie project from Waunakee to the Wisconsin River will be next. Nilson asked about the insurance coverage from the bridge that was damaged, Lucht responded that WSOR's deductible is very high, so WSOR will be covering it as part of maintenance.

Lucht stated if trespass continues at Middleton Center, WSOR will send an official letter. If trespassing does not end, WSOR will seek assistance from the local police department. Sweeney asked for the chance for members of the Commission to witness the CWR installation on the Prairie Sub.

10. **WisDOT Report – Stern - WisDOT.**

The Merrimac bridge grant was signed by FRA and WisDOT, and WisDOT is finalizing the grant agreement with WSOR. WisDOT has selected a consultant to work on the environmental analysis for the Janesville Bridge project. FRPP projects will be finalized in the coming weeks. Stern reported that WisDOT is hiring a GIS position for Rails and Harbors and a grade crossing engineer is leaving from the office.

Polyock asked about a harbor improvement in Milwaukee. Stern stated the Port of Milwaukee is receiving a \$3.5M tourism grant to improve the harbor for Great Lakes cruises. Stern will be giving a presentation next month regarding DeLong's storage and transload facility at the Port of Milwaukee.

Honer asked if the GIS position is going to be a RHS employee, Stern confirmed. Sweeney asked the deadline for the environmental analysis for the Janesville Bridge. Stern stated it will hopefully be done this summer.

11. **WRRTC Correspondence/Communications and Administrator's Report – Honer, Admin.**

Honer stated it had been a quiet start to the year but is looking to finalize some larger ongoing projects including the records retention and the private crossing enforcement work by WSOR. Mace asked about the building in Spring Grove and Honer stated that he has not heard back from the building owner.

12. **Update and Possible Action on WRRTC.org website - Honer, Admin.**

Honer explained the wrrtc.org website is currently hosted through Google Sites by way of SWWRPC's Google contract. Within the past year, Google has revamped their Google Sites application requiring the WRRTC website conversion to the new Google Sites. Honer is looking for indication from the Commission on their interest in keeping the WRRTC.org website or if maintaining the minutes and agenda on the SWWRPC.org website is preferred. Stanek stated that the ability of the public to locate the files should also be considered and search engine optimization is expensive if the Commission requires it.

Zarling stated that websites are relatively cheap for the basic functions and he would be willing to assist in this decision and possible update.

The Commission requested additional information regarding the cost and the amount of use the website receives for the March meeting.

13. **Adjournment.**

- *Motion to Adjourn at 11:01 am – Gustina/Podzilni. Passed Unanimously.*